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IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

No.

HAROLD JAMES JENKS, PETITIONER,

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, RESPONDANT.

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

CITATIONS TO OPINIONS BELOW

The opinion of the Federal District Court is unreported and is printed in Appendix A hereto, page 1a. The opinion of the Court of Appeals, dated March 25, 1975, is not officially reported and is set out in Appendix B hereto, Page 1b.

JURISDICTION.

The judgment of the Court of Appeals was entered on March 25, 1975. The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under 28 U.S.C., Section 1254(1).

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

The Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides:

> "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides:

> "No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation."

The Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides in pertinent part:

> "Section 1 . . . nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law;..."

United States Code, Title 18, Section 921(a)(3) states:

> "The term 'firearm' means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler

or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm."

United States Code, Title 18, Section 921(a)(16) states:

"The term 'firearm' means —
(A) any firearm (including any firearm with a matchlock, flintlick, percussion cap or similar type of ignition system) manufactured in or before 1898; and
(b) any replica of any firearm described in subparagraph (A) if such replica
(i) is not designed or redesigned for using rimfire or conventional centerfire fixed ammunition, or
(ii) uses rimfire or conventional centerfire fixed ammunition which is no longer manufactured in the United States and which is not readily available in the ordinary channels of commercial trade."

United States Code, Title 18, Section 922(h) states:

"It shall be unlawful for any person —
(1) who is under indictment for , or who has been convicted in any court of, a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year;
(2) who is a fugitive from justice;
(3) who is an unlawful user of or addicted to marihuana or any depressant or stimulant drug (as defined in section 201(v) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act [21 USCS sec. 321(v)]) or narcotic drug (as defined in section 4731(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 [26 USCS sec. 4731 (a)]); or
(4) who has been adjudicated as a mental defective or who has been committed to any mental institution;
to receive any firearm or ammunition which has been shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce."

United States Code, Title 18, Section 922(j) states:

"(j) It shall be unlawful for any person to receive, conceal, store, barter, sell, or dispose of any stolen

firearm or stolen ammunition, or pledge or accept as security for a loan any stolen firearm or stolen ammunition, which is moving as, which is a part of, or which constitutes, interstate or foreign commerce, knowing or having reasonable cause to believe that the firearm or ammunition was stolen."

Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, Rule 30, states:

"Instructions. At the close of the evidence or at such earlier time during the trial as the court reasonably directs, any party may file written requests that the court instructs the jury on the law as set forth in the requests. At the same time copies of such requests shall be furnished to adverse parties. The court shall inform counsel of its proposed action upon the requests prior to their arguments to the jury, but the court shall instruct the jury after the arguments are completed. No party may assure an error any portion of the charge or omission therefrom unless he objects thereto before the jury retires to consider its verdict, stating distinctly the matter to which he objects and the grounds of his objection. Opportunity shall be given to make the objection out of the hearing of the jury, and, on request of any party, out of the presence of the jury."

Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, Rule 41(e) states:

"(e) Motion for return of property. — A person aggrieved by an unlawful search and seizure may move the district court for the district in which the property was seized for the return of the property on the ground that he is entitled to lawful possession of the property which was illegally seized. The judge shall receive evidence on any issue of fact necessary to the decision of the motion. If the motion is granted the property shall be restored and it shall not be admissible in evidence at any hearing or trial. If a motion for return of property is made or comes on for hearing in the district of

trial after an indictment or information is filed, it shall be treated also as a motion to suppress under Rule 12."

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

I. Whether the admission of physical evidence obtained pursuant to a search was a violation of defendant's Fourth Amendment rights to be free from unreasonable search and seizure where the warrant was obtained without probable cause and as a result of an affidavit supported by an unnamed, confidential informer but unsupported by the underlying circumstances of how the confidential informant obtained his information or the source of that information.

II. Whether a judgment of aquittal to count one of the indictment, charging the defendant with violation of Title 18, U. S. C. Section 922(j) should have been entered where the government failed to prove that the items were "firearms" as defined in Section 921(a)(3) of Title 18, United States Code, that the defendant had knowledge that the alleged firearms were stolen, and that the alleged firearms were a part of or moving in interstate commerce.

III. Whether in an indictment charging the defendant with violation of Title 18, U. S. C. Section 922(j) the trial court erred in not properly instructing the jury as to the correct definition of firearms as defined in Section 921(a)(3), Title 18, U. S. C., and by not properly instructing the jury as to the required proof to find that the goods were a part of interstate commerce, and by instructing the jury without evidence that the guns were firearms within the context of Section 922(j), Title 18, U. S. C.

IV. Whether prejudicial error resulted from the misconduct of the United States Attorney, when in his

closing statement he made statements of fact to the jury within his own personal knowledge which were not in evidence.

V. Whether a dismissal should have been entered to count one of the indictment charging the defendant with violation of Title 18, U. S. C., Section 922(j) where count one of the indictment charged the defendant with the actual transporting of the alleged stolen firearms but the Court found from the evidence that the defendant had not transported firearms.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On October 2, 1973, a search was conducted of a residence and garage at 1131 Beaumont Street, Dayton, Ohio, pursuant to a search warrant, issued upon an affidavit given by Treasury Agent Carroll Gibson. No incriminating evidence was found in the house, however, a large collection of antique replica guns which had been stolen from Eph Gose in New Tazwell, Tennessee, was found in the garage.

Petitioner was tried on a two-count indictment charging him with a violation of Title 18, U. S. C. 922(j) in that he "knowingly transported, received, concealed and stored stolen firearms . . ." and a violation of 18 U. S. C. 2314 in that he " . . . did transport in interstate commerce . . . stolen goods, wares and merchandise, that is 224 firearms . . . knowing the same to have been stolen . . ." This was the trial court's basis for jurisdiction.

The facts in the affidavit pursuant to which the search warrant was issued established that an unnamed confidential informant had told Agent Gibson that the guns were being stored at 1131 Beaumont Street. The affidavit did not set forth the underlying circumstances or the source from which the informant

concluded the arms were being stored at 1131 Beaumont Street.

On January 18, 1974, petitioner moved that the Court suppress the evidence of all firearms seized in the October 2, 1973, search of the 1131 Beaumont Street premises pursuant to Rule 41(e) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. This motion was overruled by the District Court on March 5, 1974.

At the close of the prosecution's evidence, petitioner moved for a dismissal of the first and second count of the indictment and a motion for acquittal. The second count, which charged the petitioner with a violation of 18 U. S. C. 2314, was dismissed due to a lack of evidence to connect petitioner with the theft and the interstate transportation of the firearms. The motion to dismiss as to the first count was overruled.

As to the first count, there was no direct evidence showing that petitioner was in actual or constructive possession of the stolen property. The premises of 1131 Beaumont Street was neither owned, rented, nor occupied by petitioner. The actual evidence showed that: (1) Petitioner had in September or October of 1973 offered to purchase the premises, which offer was refused. (2) Petitioner had dated a lessee of the premises on two occasions. (3) Petitioner had been seen in or near the house on three occasions by Agent Gibson during late September and early October of 1973. (4) That petitioner had been seen carrying boxes by Agent Gibson that in his opinion resembled gun boxes. (5) That at the time of petitioner's arrest, he was a passenger in a van which was driven by the co-defendant and which belonged to neither of the two and experts for the government testified that some of the items found in the rear of the van, such as a key

and pieces of cardboard, could be traced to the gun boxes in question. (6) That the only fingerprints belonging to petitioner found among several hundred items were two fingerprints and a small palmprint found on the cardboard boxes.

A motion for dismissal and a motion for acquittal were again made at the conclusion of all the evidence and were overruled.

The prosecutor failed to offer evidence to establish that the stolen guns were firearms within the meaning of Section 921, et seq., Title 18, United States Code. Further, there was no evidence offered to prove that the guns were capable of discharging a projectile. Despite this lack of proof the Court instructed the jury that the guns were firearms within the meaning of Title 18, U. S. C. Section 922(j). To this instruction petitioner duly objected. The Court also instructed that the government must prove the stolen firearms were moved in interstate commerce in the State of Ohio. Petitioner ented a specific objection to this instruction.

During the closing argument, the assistant United States Attorney referred to a "large organization and a continuing investigation." There was no evidence of a "continuing investigation" or a "large organization" in the record and the statements were made of the prosecutor's personal knowledge. Petitioner timely objected and moved for a mistrial which motion was denied. Furthermore, the Court failed to give an instruction concerning the prosecutor's remarks.

Petitioner moved the Court for judgment notwithstanding the verdict. This motion was overruled.

The Court sentenced petitioner to a term of six years.

On appeal to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, the Court affirmed the District Court on all assign-

ments of error except the sentence, which was reversed because it was in excess of the maximum provided by law.

ARGUMENT

1. Certiorari Should Be Granted Because the Decision of the Court Below, Upon the Issue Set Forth in Question I of the Questions Presented Is in Conflict With the Decisions in *Aguilar* v. *State of Texas*, 378 U. S. 108 (1964) and *Spinelli* v. *United States*, 393 U. S. 410 (1969).

The 224 firearms which are the subject of the indictment returned against defendant-appellant were seized by agents of the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Division of the United States Treasury Department pursuant to a search warrant issued by the United States Magistrate authorizing the search of a residence located at 1131 Beaumont Street, Dayton, Ohio, for stolen firearms. The search warrant was issued on the basis of an affidavit of Agent Carroll Gibson, Special Agent, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. The affidavit read in part as follows:

> "That he has reason to believe that on the premises known as the John G. Jinks residence, consisting of a white two story frame residence with a grey roof and having the numbers 1131 displayed on the front of the building. Being further located at 1131 Beaumont Street, Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio, including all outbuildings and appurtenances thereto, in the Southern Judicial District of Ohio there is now being concealed certain property, namely a large number of stolen firearms which were stolen in the State of Tennessee, being a collection of Winchester Brand, Commerative lever action rifles and several other rifles and pistols of the World War II vintage, further described as consisting of two .30-30 Winchester rifles, Model 94 with serial numbers of 21404 and 21826 which are possessed and stored in violation of Section 922(j), Title 18, U. S. C.

> And that the facts tending to establish the foregoing grounds for issuance of a Search Warrant are as follows: On Thursday, September 27, 1973, I was contacted by a confidential informer who has proven to be reliable in the past two months on three (3) separate occasions. On two of the occasions this informer furnished information which resulted in the seizure of illegal weapons. Said informer reported to me that there is now being concealed a large number of stolen firearms being stored at the above described location and that these firearms are now for sale as 'Hot' guns (Stolen firearms). The informer further reports that the firearms are allegedly stolen from the Tennessee area, and that these guns are primarily Winchester Lever Action rifles.
>
> My investigation into this matter led me to contact Special Agent Grant McGarity, Knoxville, Tennessee. Special Agent McGarity informed me that there had been a large collection consisting of over 300 firearms stolen from the Knoxville area on Sept. 26, 1973 and that this collection consisted of Winchester Brand Lever action rifles, Commerative (sic) models. I have obtained serial numbers of some of these firearms from Special Agent McGarity.
>
> I have been advised that John G. Jinks has a reputation of dealing in stolen merchandise and firearms by Detective Dick Walley, Dayton, Police, Dept."

The Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution protects the defendant Harold Jenks against unreasonable searches and seizures and further provides that "no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized." To justify a search under the Fourth Amendment the facts set forth in the affidavit

in support of the application for a search warrant must establish probable cause to believe that the items sought are in fact seizable by virtue of being connected with criminal activity and that the items will be found in the place to be searched. *Carroll* v. *U. S.*, 267 U. S. 132 (1925); *Brinegar* v. *U. S.*, 338 U. S. 160 (1949); *U. S.* v. *Dosser,* 339 Fed. 2d 102 (6th Cir. 1964) cert. denied 382 U. S. 318.

It is well established that in a Federal prosecution the Fourth Amendment bars the use of evidence seized through an illegal search and seizure [*Weeks* v. *United States,* 232 U. S. 383 (1914)], and further, Federal criminal procedure allows for the suppression of evidence seized under a warrant where "There was not probable cause for believing the existance of the grounds on which the warrant was issued . . ." (Rule 41(e), Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.)

In the case at bar, the facts set forth in support of the search warrant do not establish probable cause to believe that the alleged firearms were on the premises to be searched at the time the search warrant was issued. The facts supporting the agent's belief that alleged stolen firearms were located on the premises at 1131 Beaumont Street is based upon information allegedly supplied by an unnamed, confidential informer. It is settled that hearsay statements of an unidentified informant are insufficient to establish probable cause unless the affidavit sets forth facts informing the Magistrate of some of the underlying circumstances from which the informant concluded that items subject to seizure were where the informant claimed they were and some of the underlying circumstances from which the officer concluded that the informant was credible and his information reliable. *Aguilar* v. *State of Texas,* supra; *Spinelli* v. *United States,* supra.

Although the affidavit in support of the search warrant satisfies the requirement that the underlying circumstances set forth show the informant to be "credible" and his information "reliable" in the case at bar, the affidavit does not set forth the underlying circumstances from which the informant concluded that the 224 firearms were located at 1131 Beaumont Street at the time of the search nor the underlying circumstances from which the informant concluded that the alleged stolen firearms from Tennessee were the same firearms which were located at the 1131 Beaumont address at the time of the search. In other words, there was nothing set forth in the affidavit from which the Magistrate could learn the source of the informant's information nor from which the Magistrate could conclude that the unnamed informant was in a position to know that any alleged stolen firearms, and specifically, the alleged stolen Tennessee firearms, were on the premises at 1131 Beaumont Street in Dayton. Since the affidavit failed to set forth facts showing these underlying circumstances, and the affidavit is the only source that a Magistrate can consider in determining probable cause for a search warrant, *Aguilar* v. *State of Texas,* supra, the Magistrate could not have known whether the hearsay statements of the unnamed informant were anything more than just "casual rumors circulating in the underworld", contrary to the dictates of *Spinelli* v. *United States,* supra at 393, and the affidavit was insufficient to constitute the required showing of probable cause under the Fourth Amendment.

Further, other statements in the affidavit that Agent Gibson had been advised a large collection of firearms were stolen in Knoxville, Tennessee or that John G. Jinks had a reputation of dealing in stolen merchandise and firearms were not sufficient to cure the otherwise

defective affidavit and establish probable cause according to *Spinelli* v. *United States,* supra, at 418-419.

In the case at bar, the defendant has standing to challenge the validity of the search and seizure under the established rule that one charged with a crime of which possession is an essential element, as in the case at bar, has standing to challenge the validity of the search, without regard to whether he asserts an invasion of his privacy because of either a proprietary or possessory interest in the premises. *Jones* v. *United States,* 362 U.S. 257 (1960); *Simmons* v. *United States,* 390 U.S. 377 (1968); *Colosimo* v. *Perini,* 415 Fed. 2d 804, 805 (6th Cir. 1969).

A review of the allegations of the affidavit herein in their totality does not establish probable cause to believe that alleged stolen firearms were located at the Beaumont Street address at the time the search warrant was issued. Although the affidavit of Agent Gibson sets forth facts advising the Magistrate as to the grounds upon which he concluded that this unnamed informant was reliable, the affidavit submitted herein is fatally deficient in that it fails to set forth the underlying circumstances from which the Magistrate could independantly judge the validity of the informant's conclusion that stolen firearms were located at the Beaumont Street address. The affidavit does not set forth facts showing that the unnamed informant's information as to the location of the firearms was based on personal knowledge. Nor does the affidavit set forth facts showing that the informant obtained his information from other sources and that these sources were reliable.

2. Certiorari Should Be Granted Because the Decision of the Court Below, Upon the Issue Set Forth in Question II of the Questions Presented, Is in Conflict With the Decisions in *United States* v.

Ruffin, 490 F. 2d 557 (8th Cir., 1974); *Booth* v. *United States*, 154 Fed. 2d 73 (9th Cir., 1946); *Schwachter* v. *United States*, 237 Fed 2d 640 (6th Cir., 1956); *U.S.* v. *Ross*, 92 U.S. 281.

The defendant was found guilty of having violated Section 922(j), Title 18, United States Code, which provides as follows:

> "It shall be unlawful for any person to receive, conceal, store, barter, sell, or dispose of any stolen firearm or stolen ammunition, or pledge or accept as security for a loan any stolen firearm or stolen ammunition, which is moving as, which is a part of, or which constitutes interstate or foreign commerce, knowing or having reasonable cause to believe that the firearm or ammunition was stolen."

The indictments under which the defendant was charged reads as follows:

COUNT I

On or about the 2nd day of October, 1973, in the Southern District of Ohio, HAROLD JAMES JENKS, knowingly transported, received, concealed and stored stolen firearms, that is 224 firearms which had been stolen from New Tazwell, in the State of Tennessee and moved in interstate commerce to Dayton in the State of Ohio, knowing and having reasonable cause to believe the firearms to have been stolen; in violation of Sections 922(j) and 924(a), Title 18, United States Code.

COUNT II

On or about the 2nd day of October, 1973, HAROLD JAMES JENKS, did transport in interstate commerce from New Tazwell in the State of Tennessee, to Dayton in the State of Ohio in the Southern District of Ohio, stolen goods, wares and merchandise, that is, 224 firearms, of the value of approximately $70,000 knowing

the same to have been stolen in violation of Section 2314, Title 18, United States Code.

At the trial, the lower Court dismissed count two of the indictment against the defendant for the reason that the government had provided no evidence that defendant-appellant had transported any of the stolen firearms in interstate commerce.

At the conclusion of the government's case, at the conclusion of all the evidence, and after a guilty verdict had been returned by the jury against the defendant, defendant moved for a directed judgment of acquittal as to count one of the indictment. The trial Court overruled said motions. The basis of the said motions was that the government had failed to provide evidence that the firearms in questions were firearms as defined in Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code, as the term is used in Section 922(j) of the United States Code. Second, that count one of the indictment had charged that defendant knowingly transported, received, concealed and stored stolen firearms and that being held to strict proof of the allegations the government had not shown evidence that defendant transported the firearms. Third, that the government had shown no evidence that the firearms were moving as, or a part of, or that they constituted interstate or foreign commerce.

It is recognized that in considering whether a directed verdict of acquittal should have been entered the Court must assume that all evidence and reasonable inferences to be drawn therefrom are to be viewed in a light most favorable to the government. *U.S.* v. *LaRose,* 459 Fed. 2d 361 (6th Cir., 1972).

Section 921(a)(3) of Title 18 of the United States Code defines firearms as follows:

> "The term 'firearm' means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or

> may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; of (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm."

Although the only testimony at trial was that the guns were antique replica firearms, the Court not only failed to direct a verdict, but charged the jury that the guns were firearms as a matter of law. The Court required no evidence, and there was presented no evidence, that the guns were firearms as above defined. Without any such proof and viewing the evidence in a light most favorable to the government, the government failed to prove the element of stolen firearms under Title 18, Section 922(j) of the United States Code.

Second, since the government's indictment in count one charged that the defendant "transported" the alleged stolen guns in "interstate commerce", it was incumbent upon the government to present evidence to this issue and prove it. However, the government did not present any evidence that defendant transported the guns in interstate commerce and the Court dismissed count two of the indictment because there was no proof that defendant had transported the guns. Thus, viewing the evidence in a light most favorable to the government, the government failed to prove yet another element of their indictment in count one.

In addition to the glaring failure of proof heretofore raised, there is the more sophisticated question regarding the interpretation of Section 922(j) of Title 18. The only case which counsel for defendant-appellant has found which construed Section 922(j) is the case of *United States* v. *Ruffin,* supra. In the *Ruffin* case, the Court had before it the same question presented here and the Court in following the rationale found in the

dicta of the Supreme Court of the United States in *U.S. v. Bass*, 404 U.S. 836, 92 Su. Ct. 515, 30 L. Ed. 2d 488 (1971), reversed the conviction of the Ruffin brothers. The Court in the *Bass* case left open the exact reach of Title 18, (*Bass*, supra, at page 343, N. 10, 92 S. Ct. at 520), but it noted that Title 18 apparently does not reach possessions or intrastate transactions at all, even those with an interstate commerce nexus, but is limited to the sending or receiving of firearms as part of an interstate transportation." *Id.* at 342-343, 92 S. Ct. at 520. Section 922(j) applies to a firearm "which is moving as, which is a part of, or which constitutes an interstate or foreign commerce." In the *Ruffin* case the Court held that Section 922(j) requires proof of transactions that are a part of an interstate transaction. The court held that the statutory language clearly requires a continuing relationship with interstate commerce at the time of the alleged concealment. The Court noted that the language relating to interstate commerce under Section 922(j) is virtually identical to the earlier language of the National Stolen Property Act and its successor statutes. 18 U.S.C., Section 2313 and 1215. The Court in *Ruffin* made an analysis of the decisions under these statutes for the purpose of guiding it and reaching a decision under Section 922(j). The Court concluded from this analysis that unexplained possession of stolen property shortly after it has been transported from another state was insufficient to establish that the property was a part of interstate commerce (*Booth* v. *United States*, supra) and that evidence that property was stolen from another state by itself was insufficient to prove that the property was still moving in interstate commerce, which a jury would necessarily have to infer to convict (*Schwachter* v. *United States*, supra). Thus, the mere fact that property stolen in Tennessee was found in Ohio is not sufficient

by itself to show the goods were a part of interstate commerce at the time of the alleged crime in Ohio.

Following the reasoning in *U.S.* v. *Ruffin*, supra, as stated above, defendant Jenks is entitled to a reversal of his conviction. The strongest evidence the government could produce was to the effect that defendant had made a written offer to purchase the house including the garage in which the guns were found, which offer was not accepted by the seller. In addition, defendant had occasionally dated one of the women who was a tenant of this residence, but he did not reside there, but lived in a home with his wife and children at Fairborn, Ohio, some ten or fifteen miles from the 1131 Beaumont Street address. There was no proof that defendant-appellant exercised dominion or control over the house or garage at any time. In fact, the government's proof was to the contrary. Although it is argued that this evidence is not sufficient to prove possession, either constructive or actual, viewing it in a light most favorable to the government a jury could infer possession, assuming defendant's argument fails.

Taking this inference of possession and evidence that the guns had been stolen in Tennessee from which the jury must necessarily have infered that the guns were a part of interstate commerce, contrary to the *Ruffin* case, supra, and there being no evidence presented by the government that defendant had knowledge that the guns were stolen, a finding of guilty rests on an inference that the defendant had knowledge the guns were stolen because of his possession and the stolen guns were a part of interstate commerce. This would be to allow an inference on another inference to prove the material element of knowledge, which is universally condemned. 29 *Am. Jur.* 2d, Section 166, pg. 205; *U.S.* v. *Ross*, 92 U.S. 281, 23 L. Ed. 707.

Therefore, in following the *Ruffin* and *Ross* cases, supra, and viewing the evidence most favorable to the government, the evidence failed to establish that the guns were a part of interstate commerce, that defendant had possession of them, and that the defendant had knowledge of the stolen character of the guns. To hold that this circumstantial evidence sufficient to convict would also be contrary to the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution amounting to comment upon defendant's failure to explain circumstantial evidence by refusing to take the witness stand to rebut the conclusion of unexplained possession found from the facts which gave rise to the first inference.

3. Certiorari Should Be Granted Because the Decision of the Court Below, Upon the Issue Set Forth in Question III of the Questions Presented, Are in Conflict With the Decisions in *United States* v. *Ruffin*, 490 Fed. 2d 557 (8th Cir., 1974); *Schwachter* v. *U.S.*, 237 Fed 2d 640 (6th Cir., 1956).

In any criminal case it is necessary and incumbant upon the government to prove to the jury beyond a reasonable doubt every essential element of the offense charged in the indictment. *Christoffel* v. *U.S.*, 388 U.S. 84, 89, 69, S. Ct. 1447, 93 L. 1826; *Boatright* v. *U.S.* (8th Cir.), 105 Fed. 2d 737, 740. The trial judge in a criminal case may not direct the jury to find a contoverted material fact against the defendant. *Kouda* v. *U.S.*, (7th Cir.), 166 Fed. 91; *U.S.* v. *Gollin*, (3rd Cir.), 166 Fed. 2d 123; *Schwachter* v. *U.S.*, 237 Fed. 2d 640 (1956). This issue pertains to two errors in the Courts instructions, and the same are hereinafter discussed individually:

(1) The Court erred in its instructions to the jury as to the definition of firearms within the meaning of Section 922(j), Title 18, United States Code. The only evidence was that the gun collection consisted of antique replicas, not capable of firing ammunition commonly

found in the market places of the United States and sold as a common type of ammunition. The fact of the matter is, the government did not even produce evidence that these guns were capable of firing any type of ammunition. The Court and the jury could only speculate as to whether or not these weapons were manufactured for or were capable of firing. At the conclusion of all the evidence, the Court charged the jury, after reading Title 18, Section 922(j), that: "The firearms or collection of firearms in this case are firearms within the context of this Statute.".

This was the only instruction given by the Court to the jury in regard to the definition of "firearms" under the Act, although firearms is specifically defined in Title 18, Section 921 of the United States Code. To this charge, defendant pursuant to Rule 30 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, entered a specific objection, which was ignored by the Court. The instruction on its face advised the jury that the stolen gun collection in question consisted of "firearms" as a matter of law and therefore effectively took the question as to this element of the offense from the jury. This action by the Court was contrary to law and prejudicial to defendant-appellant's case thereby entitling him to a reversal of the verdict and judgment.

A second instruction given by the Court to the jury which defendant-appellant claims to be erroneous is that part of the instruction dealing with the element of interstate nexus. The Court's instruction to the jury on this element consisted of the Court reading Section 922(j) to the jury, and in describing the essential elements of the crime which made up the offense, and the Court stated that the government must prove that the stolen firearms were moved in interstate commerce in the State of Ohio. To this instruction, defendant-

appellant, through counsel, again entered his specific objection.

In *United States* v. *Craven,* 478 Fed. 2d 1329 (6th Cir., 1973), the Court discussed the interstate commerce requirement as an element of the offense under Section 922(h), Title 18, United States Code, and in that case the Court of Appeals stated that this section does not extend to firearms which have merely previously been transported interstate. In *United States* v. *Ruffin,* supra, the Court held that the only reasonable construction of Section 922(j) of Title 18 like Section 922(h) of that same title required proof of transactions that are a part of interstate transactions. The Court further held that the statutory language clearly requests a continuing relationship with interstate commerce at the time of the alleged concealment. There can be no doubt that the Court inaccurately described the necessary proof.

Either of the two errors contained in this issue unquestionably entitles the defendant-appellant to a reversal of the verdict due to the obvious inherent prejudicial nature of such errors.

4. Certiorari Should Be Granted Because the Decision of the Court Below, Upon the Issue Set Forth in Question IV of the Questions Presented Is in Conflict With the Decisions in *Burger* v. *U.S.,* 295 U.S. 78; *Williams* v. *U.S.,* 168 U.S. 382; *Hall* v. *U.S.,* 150 U.S. 76.

During closing argument the Assistant United States Attorney committed an act of misconduct in his closing remarks to the jury when he referred to a "large organization and a continuing investigation" as supportive of his position of the defendant Jenk's guilt when there was no evidence to any organization or any continuing investigations in evidence, so that the remarks were made to inflame the jury and prejudice the defendant in the manner hereinafter described.

The evidence presented by the government was such that a jury would reasonably inquire as to defendant's guilt by comparing much stronger evidence against individuals who had not been charged or tried for the crime or crimes relative to the stolen firearms.

During the trial evidence was presented which implicated a minimum of five other individuals to either the burglary in Tennessee, the gun collection, the residence at 1131 Beaumont Street, Dayton, Ohio, or a truck which contained cardboard connected with the gun collection. However, there was no evidence connecting defendant to the burglary or the truck, and no evidence showing defendant had access to or dominion over the garage where the guns were located.

Considering this evidence, without the prosecutor's statements, it can reasonably be assumed that should the jury have reached a conclusion that there was comparatively stronger evidence in the record against these other persons, than there was against defendant-appellant, and that therefore any one, part or all could have been guilty of the crime charged and defendant-appellant innocent. However, if the jurors, or any one of them, accepted the prosecutor's statement as true that defendant was involved in a large organization as such facts were within his personal knowledge, he, she or they would be reasonably induced to compound such evidence against the defendant by including him in the group and/or organization, so as to impute his guilt or nullify any reasonable doubt of guilt the juror or jurors may have had prior to the making of such statement by the prosecutor. This action of the prosecutor was not only willful, but was well calculated and effectively prevented the defendant-appellant from having a fair trial and receiving a fair verdict. Although counsel objected to the statement and moved for mistrial, the Court

overruled the objection and motion and did not even instruct the jury to disregard the statement.

Counsel should never in the course of argument state facts which are based upon his own personal knowledge, regardless of their relevancy to the issues at bar, since if he desires to get such facts before the jury, he should take the stand and present such facts in a legitimate manner. *Hall* v. *U.S.*, (4th Cir.) S. Carolina, 256 Fed. 748. This rule is especially applicable to the prosecuting attorney, since his official position as a representative of the people carries wuch weight with the jury that if statements of fact predicted on his knowledge rather than on the evidence, constitutes reversible error. However, statements made by the prosecutor in the present case, when considered in connection with the evidence in the case was so impressive and prejudicial that it deprived defendant-appellant of a fair trial within the meaning of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and fell far below the basic fairness expected in the conduct of a criminal case.

Further, it is well settled that a statement by counsel in argument of facts not in evidence or a misstatement of the evidence is generally regarded as reversible error. *Burger* v. *U.S.*, 295 U.S. 78, 79 L. Ed. 1314, 55 S. Ct. 629; *Williams* v. *U.S.*, 168 U.S. 382, 42 L. Ed. 509, 18 S. Ct. 92; *Hall* v. *U.S.*, 150 U.S. 76, 37 L. Ed. 1003, 14 S. Ct. 22, especially if the statement of facts not in evidence is willful. *Waldren* v. *Waldren*, 156 U.S. 361, 39 L. Ed. 453, 14 S. Ct. 383.

5. Certiorari Should Be Granted Because the Decision of the Court Below, Upon the Issue Set Forth in Question V of the Questions Presented Is in Conflict with the Decisions of *U.S.* v. *Ruffin*, 490 Fed. 2d 557 (8th Cir., 1974); *U.S.* v. *Bass*, 404 U.S. 336 (1971); *U.S.* v. *Craven*, 478 Fed. 2d 1329 (6th Cir., 1973).

Count one of the indictment charges that: "On or about the second day of October, 1973, in the southern district of Ohio, Harold James Jenks, knowingly transported, received, concealed and stored stolen firearms, that is 224 firearms which had been stolen from New Tazwell, in the State of Tennessee, and moved in interstate commerce to Dayton, in the State of Ohio, knowing and having reasonable cause to believe the firearms to have been stolen; in violation of Sections 922(j) and 924(a), Title 18, United States Code."

At the conclusion of the State's case, the defendant-appellant, through counsel, in addition to making a motion for judgment of acquittal, moved the Court for a dismissal of count one of the indictment. The Court overruled this motion.

According to the language of Section 922(j) and the manner in which the Courts have interpreted the interstate provision of such section, to wit: that stolen firearms must be moving as, being a part of, or constitute interstate or foreign commerce at the time the offense is committed, count one of the indictment is insufficient.

At the conclusion of the evidence, the Court found as a matter of law that the defendant-appellant did not *transport* said firearms in interstate commerce, which was the Court's basis for dismissing count two of the indictment against defendant-appellant. The second reference to interstate commerce as found in count one of the indictment merely alleges that the firearms *moved* in interstate commerce to Dayton, Ohio, thus speaking in the past tense and therefore could not support a conviction for violation of Section 922(j), which Section requires that the crime occur during a time when the goods are moving or are a part of interstate commerce in the present tense. See *U.S.* v. *Bass,* supra; *U.S.* v. *Ruffin,* supra; *U.S.* v. *Craven,* supra.

The defendant-appellant attempted to clarify the indictment in this regard by filing a motion for a bill of particulars, specifically asking for details of the interstate transportation. The Court overruled this motion for a bill of particulars by simply not ruling on said motion along with other preliminary motions, although the Court stated on several occasions throughout the trial that it would at some point rule on them.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, this petition for a Writ of Certiorari should be granted.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE

The undersigned hereby certifies that he is duly admitted to practice before this Court and that he has personally served a copy of the Writ of Certiorari upon William W. Milligan, United States Attorney, Robert Zitco, Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Marconi and Gay Streets, Columbus, Ohio, and Harry H. Ellis, Esq., Regional Counsel, Bureau of Tobacco, Alcohol and Firearms, 550 Main Street, Cincinnati, Ohio, this 21st day of April, 1975.

William J. Abraham

David K. Purkey

David K. Purkey
Counsel for Defendant-Appellant